

The compositions of Hwang further comprise a nongrafted or graft-modified substantially linear ethylene polymer and an interpolymer of ethylene and an unsaturated carbonyl compound. While Hwang discloses such interpolymers as ethylene vinyl acetate (EVA) and ethylene and carbon monoxide (ECO), they do not specifically disclose an ethylene/vinyl acetate/carbon monoxide (EVACO) terpolymer which is a key component in Applicant's invention. Hwang's generic disclosure would not help one of skill in the art to arrive at an invention specifically requiring EVACO.

Clearly, the disclosure of Hwang does not even address the same problem as the claimed invention, i.e. flame retardant polyolefin blends which are halogen-free and useful for replacing polyvinyl chloride (PVC). As such, Hwang does not disclose the use of inorganic filler as required by the claimed invention. Contrary to the Examiner's statement that fillers are recognized in the art "to provide useful properties to molding composition" - the inorganic fillers of the claimed invention are specifically present because they react with the maleic anhydride grafted polymers and improve strength. See p. 5, lines 21-28. The inorganic fillers impart an outstanding combination of flame retardancy and mechanical strength to the claimed compositions. This is not suggested in any way in the disclosure of Hwang.

One skilled in the art would be hard-pressed to find any suggestion or motivation in Hwang to arrive at a composition comprising (1) EVACO, (2) EVA or polyolefin, (3) grafted EVA or polyolefin and (4) an inorganic filler, wherein the polyolefin is selected from the group consisting of: low density polyethylene (LDPE), linear low density polyethylene (LLDPE), very low density polyethylene (VLDPE) and high density polyethylene (HDPE). Clearly the invention is inventive.

Based on the above, reconsideration of the instant claims and a positive statement in regard to inventive step are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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